

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology
and Immunization Section**

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Health Advisory: Pertussis among high school children, 20 NOV, 2014

Action requested:

- Be aware of an increase in pertussis reports among high school children.
- Fully immunize all children against pertussis, and provide a single dose of Tdap as recommended by national guidelines to:
 - Children 7-10 years who are not fully vaccinated against pertussis
 - Adolescents 11-18 years who have completed the DTP/DTaP series
 - Pregnant women in during week 27-36 of each pregnancy
 - All adults aged 19 and older
- Consider pertussis in the following situations (including in immunized patients):
 - Patients of all ages with cough illness of ≥ 2 weeks duration
 - Patients with respiratory illness of any duration who have been in contact with persons with a prolonged cough illness or who attend a school that recently sent out letters regarding a cluster of pertussis within the school.
 - Infants <12 months of age with respiratory tract symptoms *of any duration*, even if the infant is immunized against pertussis or positive for RSV
- Consider treatment for high risk patients and PEP for high-risk contacts of pertussis cases (see below)
- Report pertussis cases to Public Health within 24 hours (206-296-4774)

Background: While county-wide numbers of pertussis cases this season are not higher than expected, a recent cluster of cases among Roosevelt High School students and their contacts (including household members), has been reported (10 confirmed cases reported since the beginning of October). There might be additional cases that were not tested or reported to Public Health. All reported student cases were up to date on their pertussis vaccinations.

Health care providers should use droplet precautions (including a surgical mask) when within 3 feet of persons with suspected pertussis during patient encounters. Pertussis testing is available at the Public Health – Seattle & King County Laboratory (206 731-8950) as well as local reference laboratories. A negative pertussis culture or PCR test does not rule-out pertussis when the clinical picture is suggestive. In certain high-risk cases and contacts, initiating treatment after 3 weeks of paroxysmal cough and chemoprophylaxis for contacts should be considered.

High-risk cases and contacts include infants aged <1 year and individuals with pertussis or suspected pertussis who may expose persons at high-risk of severe disease (health care workers; labor and delivery, neonatal, pediatric and post-partum staff; pediatricians; midwives, labor coaches, pregnant women; and other persons who may expose an infant).

Resources

Public Health King County:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/pertussis.aspx>

CDC Guidelines for Control of Pertussis Outbreaks:

<http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/outbreaks/guide/index.html>

CDC Tdap vaccine info : www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/combo-vaccines/DTaP-Td-DT/tdap.htm